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illustration : Iack
殺戮者
Summoned Slaughter III

Summoned Slaughterer
(呼び出された殺戮者)
Volume 03
The Hero is thirsting for blood

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Story Description:

Touno Hifumi was summoned

to another world, to be a Hero for a kingdom. Unbeknownst to the summoners, he's a kill-happy person who restrained his killer instincts with martial arts. Upon arrival he slaughter various knights and the mastermind of the event, the King. Unwilling to oppose this strong killer, the Princess let him go free. Thus start the fun life of travelling the world, unrestraintly killing any who attempt to kill him.

But first, lets purchase a pair of female slaves.

Original Story can be found here:
Link

Chapter 20: Like Toy Soldiers

Completely disregarding the silent Pajou and the Orsongrande Knights, and the equally silent Alyssa from Vichy, Hifumi called out to Origa and Kasha.

「 Well then, let's get a move on. 」

Saying so, Hifumi turned towards the horses, only to be stopped by a panicking Alyssa.

「 W-wait a minute! You're leaving just like that? 」

An over-the-shoulder drawl came back,

「 Aa? I really don't care about discussions. I was attacked, I responded. That's it. 」

「 Don't mind him, he's just like that.... You're from Vichy, yes? I am a Knight from Orsongrande, Pajou. And you? 」

「 Ah, I am Alyssa. That is, I don't particularly have a title.... 」 [TN: she uses the male informal 'boku' here]

Noting the difference in status between them, Alyssa unintentionally shrank and spoke timidly.

Pajou laughed elegantly, extending her right hand.

「 I'm pleased you were able to

survive the incident. 」

As they shook hands, Alyssa composed herself.

Somehow, she gives off the feeling of an adult woman... (Alyssa)

「 Well then, let us speak of what to do after this. We will be acting as immigration control for our country until order is restored. Since the criminal was related to our country, please let us collect his and our soldier's bodies. 」

「 Aah, y-yes. 」

Alyssa inadvertently agreed to Pajou's smooth and flowing speech.

Originally, the Vichy side should be documenting the bodies and

damage, becoming important in their investigations. Moreover, the scene of the crime was on the Vichy side, thereby falling under Vichy's jurisdiction, no matter the involved parties.

Alyssa was definitely not going to avoid a penalty for this.

While waiting for Hifumi, Origa overheard the conversation. She gazed at Alyssa with pity in her gaze, Alyssa seemed to not have noticed the predicament she was in.

The poor girl.... (Origa)

Seeing that Pajou had skilfully monopolized the investigation with some underhanded methods, she chuckled to herself.

Entering Vichy would not be a nice event. The other side's Knights would be the source of plenty of problems.

In any case, Pajou was relieved that no more complex situations would crop up.

「 Anyway, Alyssa-san, isn't there going to be assistance from Vichy? 」

「 That's right! Ah, but..... it's impossible, there's no one on the Vichy side but me. 」

Seals and signatures of approval are necessary from both sides for merchants and travellers to cross boundaries. In case either of them are missing, it is considered as an

illegal entry into the country.

Of course, there is the aspect of national defence too, evacuating the place is a problem.

The Vichy side had been completely annihilated, leaving no available means of communication. Hifumi returned on horseback to where Alyssa was contemplating further actions.

「 Pajou, take care of the departure formalities. 」

Hifumi passed her the documents; Pajou took them and affixed the necessary seals and signatures on it. Meanwhile, the corpse of the soldier had been dragged over.

「 Ne, ne~.. 」

Alyssa called out to the waiting Hifumi without hesitation.

「 What? 」

「 I have a small request... 」

Alyssa asked Hifumi to relay a message to the first guardroom they saw on the highway after entering Vichy.

「 Please convey the current situation and inform that I am requesting reinforcements. 」

Hifumi considered for a moment, then nodded.

「 However, you will have to tell me about the town in Vichy. 」

「 Great! Thank you! 」

Entirely believing Hifumi's made-up reason of sightseeing a large town, Alyssa happily gave them a detailed explanation.

「 So the capital city can be reached in about 10 days via carriage? 」

Alyssa replied to Origa's question with a smile.

「 That's right. From here, you can go to the capital, the highway passes near the Horant border in a wide curve. 」

「 Hee, the road passes by Horant, the place from where those evil magic tools came from. 」

While Kasha was smirking, Hifumi voiced a question.

「 Hm? Orsongrande and Horant's borders also touch, did you take a deliberate detour? 」

To his question, Pajou explained.

Originally, when the genius magician established Horant as independent, a considerable part of Orsongrande was invaded. As a result, there were a few skirmishes and now there is little interaction between the two.

「 Alyssa-san, I have a request. 」

「 Ah, I understand. 」

Alyssa received and cleared Hifumi's travel pass and Pajou continued,

「 Therefore, if a magician from

Horant ‘lawfully’ enters, there is a possibility of obtaining formal permission to leave Vishy as well.」

With someone from Vichy as a guide, and with the formal approval of Viscount Hagenti, it is possible to enter Orsongrande freely.

Therefore, though unable to discern at what level, there might be someone with power in Vichy connected to Horant in no small way, Pajou surmised.

「Now that you mention it, it is highly likely that someone is behind Beirevra.」

Though complicated in various ways, Hifumi is troublesome, but

not irresponsible so as to decline the request that requires leaving the country.

「 Well then, in any case he's entering Vichy to take in various sights. 」

* * *

Hifumi, who had collected the permit from Alyssa announced their departure to Origa and Kasha.

They advanced along the highway, reaching the town called Aroseru by carriage in about 2 hours.

As per Alyssa's explanation, a town enclosed by a wall came into view. Being close to the border, it seemed to be made in a similar fashion as Fukaroru in Orsongrande.

「 Somehow, it does not look too different from our country 」
(Kasha)

Hifumi had a similar impression to Kasha. Was it because they were close by? Culturally there seemed to be no difference. To be frank, the food in Orsongrande was all right, but he had concerns about the food in Vichy. Then again, being close to Fukaroru, it would probably not be a problem.

While showing the permit at the entrance of the town, the soldiers there directed him to their in-charge in the guardroom.

「 Surprisingly undefended. Or, how should I put it, the gatekeeper had a strangely mechanical vibe. 」

「 Mechanical? 」

「 No emotional ups or downs are visible. Just like repeating a fixed motion. 」

「 Ah, but aren't serious soldiers supposed to be like that? 」

「 .... Not quite... 」

Though somewhat cautious, it couldn't be helped so Hifumi entered the guardroom. He displayed the coin denoting his peerage to the person in-charge.

A man in simple armour of medium height and build came out of the interior, and looking straight at Hifumi asked what business he had.

His eyes were unfocused.

「 A soldier called Alyssa asked me to pass on a message. 」

Hifumi explained that all the soldiers at the border post have been killed, apart from Alyssa. When he explained that immediate assistance was required, the man thanked him for his cooperation in a smooth voice without looking the slightest bit thankful.

「 Are you staying here today? Have you decided on a hotel? 」

「 We are staying here, yes, but the hotel has not been decided. 」

「 Then if you head towards the interior of the town, there is a hotel with nice and clean rooms. There isn't another suitable for a noble to

live in. 」

「 Is that so? We'll do that then. 」

Though slightly wary of the man's appearance, Hifumi decided to go along with it.

「 Then, we must be going to the border post, please excuse me. 」

With a perfunctory bow to Hifumi, the man left along with a subordinate.

「 Somehow the reaction of the in-charge and the soldiers at the gate seemed a little strange. 」

Origa peevishly stated that she thought they were quite impolite to her master, a noble.

「 I've seen someone in a similar state before..... where was it? 」 (Hifumi)

「 After all, like in Fukaroru, are the people here planning a dirty trick too? 」 (Origa)

* * *

While they were taking, they reached the hotel. Since Hifumi had learnt the written characters, he could recognise the name.

「 Here? 」

The horses were tethered outside,they pushed open the wooden door and went in. There was a small counter in what appeared to be a spacious dining hall.

「 Welcome! 10 silver coins for one room for a night. There are 17 double rooms. There is no room to put 3 or more people in one. 3 silver coins per horse. They will be moved to the stable in the back. 」

There was an old man with an unsociable expression on his face sitting at the counter.

「 One single room, my companions will take a double room. 」

After depositing a pile of silver coins on the counter, the old man took out 2 keys from under the counter.

「 This is for the single room, this one is for the double room. The

second floor is entirely guest rooms. Dinner will be prepared before nightfall, and served in this hall. 」

The old man fell silent after telling them the necessary information and writing down the key numbers.

Taking the key, the trio went up to the 2nd floor.

「 Lie down a bit before dinner. We may have to move at night. 」

「 Is something going to happen? 」

「 After the group confirms the situation at the border, some will return to report. By that time it will most likely be night. If we have to move, it will be then. 」

After a light lunch, it was decided that they would rest and after dinner, observe the street from their rooms.

「 Our opponents will not be simpletons without strategies like Alyssa. 」

Hifumi entered his room immediately after saying that.

Kasha shook her head resignedly while Origa laughed.

「 But I think it's a good thing that we can even randomly look a little for Beirevra. 」

Origa entered the room while Kasha followed, lost in thought.

* * *

「 ..... Those fellows are easy to understand. 」

On the second floor of the hotel, Hifumi murmured, lying in wait. The room was pitch-dark.

Several armoured men passed by on the street after darkness fell and pedestrian traffic declined.

Hifumi, who had completely acclimated his sight to the darkness saw it clearly. With hands bound behind the back, a diminutive shadow was visible walking unsteadily between two men. When they passed by the front of the hotel, it was clear the person was Alyssa.

Badly beaten up, left cheek swelled

and dried streams of blood coming from the mouth.

It seems they have been walking for a long time, and occasionally her foot slowed, only to receive a kick from behind every time to forcibly advance.

Watching the sorry situation, Origa and Kasha both murmured “How cruel”.

「 Taking her to a spot different from this afternoon’s guardroom. Well now, what to do, I wonder... 」

「 Why was Alyssa arrested? A soldier from their own country.... 」

Though her face was not visible, the speech pattern and voice identified the speaker as Origa.

「 She was the only one who survived the scene of the crime, could that be it? 」(Hifumi)

「 But why not make the most of it? Or could it be a chance to bump off the eyewitness who knows what happened? 」

「 It would be to confirm what the witness knows and to keep secrets that may get someone else into trouble. Torture, drugs.... Drugs? 」(Hifumi)

Hifumi remembered the state of the soldier when they came into the town.

「 That's it, drugs! If I remember correctly, there were drugs to stabilise the mind and if addicted, it

leads to a state of losing emotions. Similar to the fellow who had that magic tool attached to him... 」

Guessing and putting his thoughts in order, Hifumi suddenly raised his head.

「 Is something the matter? 」

「 Do you need to wear armour? It seems that they are also attempting to capture us. Around 10 people are coming towards the hotel. 」

「 Fight here? I'll pull out the lighting magic tool.... 」

「 No, no need. Before that, I'll need to find Alyssa, she does not seem to be too far. 」

「 Eeh!? 」

「 Kasha, why are you so surprised? 」

「 No, saving a girl while enemies are coming, it does not sound like master.... 」

Seeing Kasha honestly surprised, Hifumi thought it quite vexing that his reputation was that bad.

「 I said a while ago that I was not a homicidal maniac. What Alyssa knows and may hear in the future may be valuable information. Besides, 10 people isn't bad for a warm-up, and you two have not been instructed on how to fight in the dark. In any case, we'll meet guys like these again. At that time, kill them well. 」

Kasha was relieved when Hifumi mentioned killing.

Apparently Origa too, from her relieved expression and a quietly muttered 「 As expected from master. 」

They aren't making fun of me are they? (Hifumi)

Mulling over those doubts, Hifumi quickly pulled out his kusarigama, stuck it in the roof and quietly climbed up.

While Kasha and Origa were staring at the swinging chain, they heard Hifumi's voice from above.

「 Grab the chain and climb up. One at a time. 」

Though scared, they somehow managed to get onto the roof. The door of the room opened. It seemed that the landlord had a key.

「 ..... Escaped huh. 」

It was the voice of the person in-charge at the town gate. After noises that indicated searching for a while, they left.

In the dark of the night, the soldiers left in the same direction Alyssa was taken.

Hifumi stood on the roof smiling, pleased at having a new prey.

Chapter 21: Shining Star

“As for battle during the night, generally speaking it is important that you are not discovered by your opponent.” (Hifumi)

Atop the roof while watching the retreating soldiers, Hifumi explained to Origa and Kasha before starting to act.

In the moonlight, Origa’s group could vaguely see the stature of Hifumi but not his facial expression.

“Be aware of the location where the light won’t shine on you. Erase your

presence. And then, without making a sound, kill. Take care that you don't hit on metal with the hamono. Don't give your opponent the chance to yell. Make sure the corpse drops silently." (Hifumi)

Hifumi explained the necessary movement to draw a walking person towards your own direction and also how to use the hamono while affixing the katana to his waist.

"Properly use the palm at the time of covering their mouth. Fingers and the arm can be bitten. Shut their nose since people can still scream through their nose." (Hifumi)

Suddenly being unable to breathe,

only that is already plenty to cause chaos, Hifumi said.

“Well then, let’s go!” (Hifumi)

“Ano … how do you plan to get down?” (Origa)

Their current location was at the rooftop of a two-storied building.

Origa was scared as she peered down on the dark road surface.

“At only such a height, you jump down, no?” (Hifumi)

“… This height is a bit …” (Origa)

“Me too, it’s impossible, I think …” (Kasha)

“Guess it can’t be helped. I will

catch you, so jump down in order." (Hifumi)

Without waiting for an answer, Hifumi nimbly descended into the darkness.

"Come down ..." (Hifumi)

"... Alright, Kasha I will go first." (Origa)

Timidly peering down while confirming Hifumi's location, Origa held her breath and jumped off the roof.

After seeing her off, Kasha's ears caught a small shriek from below which confirmed that she had likely been caught safely.

"Since Origa is light, it's fine, but ..."

(Kasha)

Kasha looked down at the gear she was wearing.

A metal armor and two swords, and although she didn't think her own weight was overly much, adding it together with the equipment she was certainly quite heavy.

Even so, she was reluctant to stay on the rooftop as is.

She knew there was no time either.

Although they were soldiers from another country, that small girl might still be tortured right at this moment.

Or if they were too late, she could possibly be killed.

Thinking of it that way, it was foolish to falter for such a reason, thus Kasha resolved herself.

“Master, I believe in you.” (Kasha)

Though it looked like she was preparing to run away, Kasha finally jumped down as well.

Hifumi skillfully caught the falling Kasha sideways and used the adjourning wall to kill the momentum.

“You aren’t injured, right?” (Hifumi)

“U, un ... thank you, master.” (Kasha)

Is it due to being afraid or is it due to being carried in his arms? Kasha

felt like her own heart beat had increased. Trying to not ponder about unnecessary matters, she quickly checked her equipment.

Likewise in the meanwhile, Hifumi gave sharp instructions.

“Do not speak from here on out. We still have some time left, with a little walking we should easily catch up. Pay attention to not make any obvious footsteps. Take out your swords.” (Hifumi)

Furthermore Hifumi told Kasha to wrap her body in a cloth he had taken out from his storage in order suppress the metallic clanking of her armor.

“Ano, master, I am ...” (Origa)

“Origa, be ready to throw your shurikens at any time. If enemies turn up along the way, use my way of killing as a model. We will have to work hard in order to rescue Alyssa on time.” (Hifumi)

“I understand” (Origa)

“In order to not stray from each other, Kasha will place her hand on my shoulder and Origa will place hers on Kasha’s shoulder while we are advancing … Let’s go.” (Hifumi)

Through her palm Kasha felt the warmth of Hifumi’s body temperature being transmitted. For some reason it felt uncomfortable.

For ending up reacting in such a way, she likewise felt like

apologizing. She was grateful how well he treated her. Yet, the skills and attitude he used in order to kill people still struck fear into her.

It was only a few minutes of moving forward along the shadows of the buildings without being hit by moonlight when Hifumi suddenly stopped and turned to the two in his back.

Entering the decaying deserted house in front of them, he murmured in a small voice.

“This seems to be the right building. There are 5 people inside and two people are patrolling the vicinity of this building.” (Hifumi)

After telling them that they should

observe his way of killing, which he would display here, he merely separated from Origa's group slightly before he melt into the darkness visibly erasing his presence.

Although he had to be close by, Origa and Kasha lost sight of him after he vanished into the darkness.

From the shadow of the building two men approached.

It was the guard patrolling outside the abandoned building.

Without having any kind of conversation, the two passed the spot where Hifumi had been before. In an instant an arm was wrapped around the lower face of one,

drawing him soundlessly into the darkness.

As his body went stiff due to the surprise and suffocation, a sickle immediately slit his throat quietly ending his life.

“Nn?” (Guard B)

The other person noticing that the guy who was supposed to be next to him vanished, turned his head for a second before the point of a katana pierced his throat.

Without even realizing what has happened, the man died just like that.

“Alright, come here.” (Hifumi)

Hifumi’s voice called the two.

Taking care to not make any sound as they approached in the direction of the faint voice, the figure of Hifumi, who was pressing his ears against the wall of the abandoned building in order to to check the state inside, dimly appeared before them.

“The interior of this building isn’t divided into rooms similar to a warehouse, that’s the current state. Alyssa is on the other side of the wall. I don’t know whether she is bound to a pillar or pinned to the wall, but it appears that she is still breathing.” (Hifumi)

Apparently three people were in front of Alyssa and the other two were located inside around the entrance on the right side.

Origa's group would lure out the two at the entrance to kill them swiftly while Hifumi would raid the interior to attract the attention of the other three in order to support them.

"I will enter from a different location." (Hifumi)

"Another location? There is another entrance?" (Origa)

As the building was in quite a worn out state, the wooden doors covering the windows were rotten and had holes a small person might fit through, too.

"You don't have to worry. Since there will be some light, it will become difficult to see for a

moment after stepping inside. Be careful of that. I leave the timing of the break in to you." (Hifumi)

Hifumi erased his presence once again and left the place.

Coming in front of the door, Origa and Kasha glanced at each other exchanging a short nod.

Origa chanted a spell with a small voice. The hinge of the door was broken with the minimum force of wind blades required.

As the hinge had become thoroughly worn out, it was very easily disconnected. The door slowly began to fall towards the outside.

The light from inside shone in a

rectangle onto the street.

“... This place is at its limit too, huh?”

Without any kind of vigilance the head of a man peeked out. Kasha swung down her sword with all her might. The head was severed as it is alongside the helmet tumbling down on the street with a *koro koro* .

“An enemy!”

The other guard drew his sword while quietly checking the outside. Discovering Kasha right in front of him, he closed the distance even though he was surprised.

However, Origa’s shuriken dug into his calf causing him to fall down in

pain. Kasha slew him where he fell.

Jumping over the corpses of the men, Origa and Kasha rushed inside. There they saw a man thrusting his sword in front of Alyssa whose hands were pinned to the wall with nails.

The remaining two men raised their swords in preparation in front of the two.

There didn't seem to be anyone present who could be a corporal.

Although Alyssa was bearing the pain, she was surprised by seeing the two charging inside.

"You are the attendants of that noble from that time!" (Guard C)

“Though we aren’t attendants.” (Kasha)

“We came to rescue her.” (Origa)

Although she said so, Origa, who surveyed the inside of the room, was panicking within her mind.

Hifumi had said he would infiltrate from another location, but since the room was surrounded by a wall of stone it didn’t seem at all possible that there was another infiltration point.

“Kill them.” (Guard C)

“”Understood.”” (Guards)

Just like with the soldiers during the day, without showing their wavering emotions, the two

prepared their swords while sidling up.

At such short distance there was certainly no chance to use magic.

Considering to use the shurikens as a diversion, Origa called out to Kasha.

“Since I will be holding both of them back, you can use the time to …” (Origa)

“Understood.” (Kasha)

Believing in the ability of her close friends, she tightly grasped the magic wand.

However, her determination was interrupted by a scream.

“Kyaa!” (Alyssa)

“Guwa!” (Guard C)

The cute shriek originated from Alyssa.

The other scream came from the man threatening Alyssa with his blade.

All of the sudden a katana passed by from the side of Alyssa’s face, piercing through the chest of the man before her eyes.

Not only was the person stabbed surprised, but even Alyssa got startled.

In contrast, Origa and Kasha who were watching that scene, were relieved since they understood right

away who had done this.

As the stabbing katana was extracted, the man collapsed dead with an astonished expression.

Furthermore after a few scraping sounds, a crack appeared on the wall surrounding Alyssa before it became brittle and crumbled down in the blink of an eye.

Alyssa, who collapsed on the spot, was caught by Hifumi from behind.

“It seems you are quite unlucky, be it this morning or now.” (Hifumi)

“Hifumi-san!” (Alyssa)

Having already lost all her strength, Alyssa was listlessly hanging from complete exhaustion. With teary

eyes she looked up to Hifumi while bearing the pain. And even though her face was swollen she showed a clumsy smile.

Due to Hifumi's absurd way of intrusion, the remaining two men were in a dumbfounded state.

Not missing this chance, Kasha killed them slashing their backs in succession.

For both of them it was instant death.

Leaving the corpses as they were, Hifumi's group at once returned to the inn, retrieved the horses, and tied them to a carriage outside.

Making use of one of the carriages stopped there, they placed Alyssa

inside and covered her with a blanket.

Having had nails struck into both hands and being obviously thoroughly beaten, Alyssa had bruises everywhere.

Because of the fatigue and injuries, it was already impossible for her to walk straight and likewise it was impossible to sleep due to the pain.

Thus she was only laying there.

While vacantly staring at the canopy part covering the roof of the carriage, Alyssa was weeping due to being rescued from this crisis and the anxiety of the future yet to come.

I may not be able to return to being

a soldier anymore, I think ... Leaving that aside, I think it has come to the point where I might not be able to move anymore ... I am not certain that I can move my legs and hands at all. It is painful. At the time I was rescued I was happy, but what shall I do from here on out?

The people she considered to be her allies tried to kill her, just to be rescued by a noble and his attendants from another country. Alyssa wasn't able to imagine how she should proceed from now on.

Rather than that, if she ended up being unable to move her body as it is ... she had to prepare for the worst in that situation, too, she concluded.

“I am coming in.” (Hifumi)

Suddenly she heard such a voice, and without waiting for her reply either the figures of two people could be seen entering the carriage.

It was Hifumi and Origa.

Kasha, for whom it was painful to see the horribly wounded Alyssa, remained outside the carriage to stand on guard.

“Hifumi-san ...” (Alyssa)

“Stay still and don’t move.” (Hifumi)

Sitting down besides Alyssa, Hifumi gently touched all over her body atop her clothes.

Sometimes the places he touched caused her pain.

She didn't feel repulsed by his action. Becoming aware of the serious expression Hifumi displayed while examining her, she removed her gaze from him to the figure of Origa who just like Hifumi watched her with a similar expression.

Ah, that's the kind of person he is, Alyssa thought and concluded to leave everything in Hifumi's hands.

"I am not sure how many ribs are broken. Besides the injuries on both hands, the bones of the right arm and both feet are fissured."
(Hifumi)

Upon being told about the situation

with extreme serenity, Alyssa accepted her fate.

“Hifumi-san, I have a request. Could you please kill me ... ?” (Alyssa)

“How did it come to such talk?” (Hifumi)

Hifumi was tilting his head in confusion. Origa softly touched him while informing him.

“When it comes to such a degree of injuries, you have to receive healing from a high ranking healer or use a great number of high grade restorative medicine. Either way dozens of gold coins are required.” (Origa)

“That’s true. I can’t pay such

amount of money. Since I can't already do any kind of work in this condition ... and because I don't want to cause trouble for someone with my impairment. Please resolve yourself to kill me. If it is Hifumi-san, I ..." (Alyssa)

Apparently her voice was quite audible as Kasha could be heard sobbing outside.

Origa was shedding tears as well.

Though the mood of the carriage's interior was dominated by depression, Hifumi looked as if it had nothing to do with him.

"If that's the case, there is no problem." (Hifumi) (ED: Farewell Alyssa, your arc was short yet

sweet!)

“Huh?” (Alyssa)

“As for restorative medicine, I bought a massive amount of them before leaving the capital. You don’t have to worry about using them.” (Hifumi)

From his storage he took out bottles made out of glass one after the other and lined them up on the floor.

Although a veteran adventurer would be hesitant to buy even one bottle of such high grade restorative medicine, the situation now made it seem as if it was a completely cheap article. Someone who was aware of their value would likely

lose consciousness upon seeing such a spectacle.

“M-Master, why do you have so many?” (Origa)

“There is restorative medicine?!” (Kasha)

Kasha had jumped into the carriage, too.

“Kasha, be a bit more quiet. So, do you drink this? Or do you apply it on the wounds? Since I haven’t tried them yet, I don’t know how to use them nor how effective they are.” (Hifumi)

“Both methods are fine, Master. For external wounds you sprinkle it on top and for the inner bone fractures you drink it in order for it to be

effective.” (Origa)

“U-using such expensive medicine, I don’t have money for that ...” (Alyssa)

“It’s alright, Alyssa. Master is a rich person.” (Origa)

In order to clear Alyssa’s mind from concerning with monetary issue, Origa told her to let it go.

Forcibly pouring it into her mouth and sprinkling it over her hands and feet, the blanket became soaked, but all of Alyssa’s wounds were healed.

“It has such an immediate effect, huh? If only it wasn’t this expensive.” (Hifumi)

“Th-Thank you very much …” (Alyssa)

They had used the restorative medicine literally like water. Alyssa who didn’t understand why it was fine to do so, still managed to express her gratitude somehow.

“For now it might be difficult for Alyssa but from here on out it is work” (Hifumi)

“Ah, yes …” (Alyssa)

Having received so many things.

Alyssa didn’t think it would be done with a few words of gratitude.

Speaking of things to do, there was nothing but to support Hifumi.

Even so, that was fine. Alyssa waited for Hifumi's words.

"Do you want to get your revenge alongside these fellows?" (Hifumi)

Next to the smiling Origa, Hifumi asked.

This is nothing else but the whispering of a devil, Kasha realized that it was already too late to retreat from this place as she saw the smiling faces of Hifumi's group.

Chapter 22: Another One Bites The Dust

Alyssa nodded towards Hifumi's invitation.

"My parents are no longer alive, and having been in the border security for so long, I don't really have any acquaintances either. So I'll come along with you guys. I'd like to exact revenge, but above that, I'd like to repay this debt", Alyssa said, whilst looking Hifumi in the eye.

"Suddenly, everyone at the border were killed, the Corporals were beaten, and I was forcibly made to

run away. Until just now, I didn't even know what was going on, and was hurting so much all over my body that I didn't even know where it was the most painful. I really thought I was going to die."

She couldn't skillfully transmit her thoughts and kept talking, even though her explanations were all over the place, while Hifumi and the rest listened quietly.

"But then you came along and saved me, and even cured all of my pain... However, except my thanks, I don't have any money or anything else to offer. Therefore, I'll become your slave. I won't complain even if you boil me."

When the word slave was

mentioned, Origa unintentionally let out a smile.

“Alyssa, both me and Kasha are Hifumi’s slaves, you know?”

“Eh? With your fine equipment, and how you’re talking familiarly with Hifumi, I thought you were his attendants, or perhaps… his lovers…”

“Well, it’s true that we’ve been given so good treatment we’ve almost forgotten we’re slaves in the first place. But attendants, huh? That doesn’t sound so bad.”

“Lover… that’s kind of…”

It seems like the words in her sentence that Kasha and Origa reacted on were different. Hifumi

retrieved some dried meat and bread from his storage to snack on, while calmly observing the spectacle.

“Master, even though Alyssa is currently deciding what to do with her life...”

“Don’t mind me, I was just hungry.”

Vigorously eating his food, Hifumi suddenly came to think of something.

“You’re saying slaves, but once we return to the capital, I’ll let you free, you know?”

“Eh? Why?”

“Ma-Master!? Are you dissatisfied with us in any way? We’ll better, so

please…”

Kasha looked gave Hifumi a blank look, while Origa started clinging to him.

“After catching Beirevra, and resolving the conflict that lead to you becoming slaves, you don’t need to be slaves anymore, right?”

Without knowing how the laws in Orsongrande works, it should still be a matter of course that in case you’re being punished for something you didn’t do, and show proof of your innocence, your punishment should be removed.

“But Master bought us, and we don’t even know if that money will be repaid.”

“I don’t particularly mind. Money isn’t all that valuable. Buying slaves was because it’s both what the person teaching me this world’s general knowledge wanted me to to do, as well as me thinking it’d be inconvenient to travel alone. As for choosing you two specifically... Well, besides your looks being fairly good, as far as I’m concerned, you also also had some ability.”

Saying that, Hifumi threw the remaining dried meat into his mouth.

“But as I said earlier as well, I’m letting you free when this matter is over and we return to the capital. Until then, it’d be good if you can think about what you want to do after that.”

“Excuse me... I wonder what I should do now?”

Alyssa, completely left behind in the conversation, timidly asked.

“Right. I don’t really need any slaves.”

“I see... A small and weak person like me don’t have any uses...”

Seeing Alyssa getting downcast, Origa looked a little anxious. But being in front of her Master, she couldn’t really do anything on her own accord, and therefore decided to keep silent.

“I’m currently just a wandering fake noble, so there’s no point in having a lot of slaves. Still, you’re free to follow us of your own volition.”

Alyssa quickly raised her head, while Hifumi continued.

“However, I have an objective. Or rather, after seeing how people in this world fight, I’ve made up my mind on something.”

“Made up your mind on what?”

“I won’t tell you the specifics, but like you’ve seen until now, there will be a lot of bloodshed. If you’re coming along, a lot of killing will be necessary, and there’s always the risk of getting killed yourself.”

Alyssa only saw Hifumi fight once, by the border. But looking at Origa and Kasha’s facial expressions, she faintly whispered “more than that?”, and subsequently got an

understanding on what
considerable carnage may look like.

“But, I’m not strong like that...”

Alyssa said without self-confidence,
to which Hifumi grinned broadly
and let out a laugh.

“I’ll teach you some fighting
techniques. Besides, just fighting
isn’t what matters. What really
matters is your resolve.”

It’s not something you need to
answer to anytime soon, he also
added.

More importantly, what actions
should be taken now?

Having Alyssa tell them the
location of the town

representative's mansion, Hifumi strapped his sword to his waist.

"Alyssa will wait here, while Origa and Kasha keep guard. If enemies appears, kill them."

"Understood."

Hearing Origa's answer, Hifumi got off the carriage.

Stretching his back, he looked up at the moon.

It was still cloudy outside, scarce with moonlight.

The night flowing with blood had yet to conclude.

Hifumi didn't specifically talk about it, but he had come to a conclusion about something he was very dissatisfied with.

It was the fact that no one in this world had any tension regarding the possibility of being killed at any time.

It was the same when he heard about the fight between Orsongrande and the Beastmen tribe. It seemed like the wars of this world was more on the level of skirmishes. Of course some people died, but real wars rarely happened.

Struggles between individuals were much fiercer.

In areas with strong demons that

might not be the case, but the fights between humans that looked more like some kind of sports event, was all that Hifumi currently knew about. The degree of people doing a bit of scheming is more an art of deception, rather than the art of war.

Boring.

Coming to this world, being able to kill people, Hifumi felt satisfied for a while. However, he soon started building up resentment towards the people in this world, with their carefree disposition.

There are no strong people here. No people frantically scheming for their lives. No opportunity to use the dark magic painstakingly

developed through the nights. Wars where people are desperately racking their brains, where the warriors were hoarding weapons, and where each country respectively were fighting frenetically to ensure their survival... none of these existed either.

Maybe that's good if you're striving for peace.

But there are threats.

Why are no one earnestly trying to kill their enemies?

Like this, it's no different from Japan.

While expressing his displeasure, he arrived at the town

representative's mansion.

The town representative was a middle aged man named Ortis, a descendant of the merchant who was the key figure in the construction of this town.

A building three stories tall made out of stone, adorned with several windows made out of glass, in this world, was something showing that you have money.

He's here.

According to what Alyssa saw during the day, a man seeming like a Colonel was also present in the building. Wonder if she come here to report before? Whichever the

case, it was no longer of any interest. In the town's current circumstances, gathering information became a difficult task. Therefore, the best way to do it was in a much simpler fashion.

By the entrance, two haggard soldiers were conspicuously standing guard, with swords handing from their waists.

Seeing that, Hifumi heaved a sigh. As expected. Once you've seen them, your eyes will unconditionally be drawn there.

He first thought he could talk to them, but quickly gave up on the idea. The guards would realize something was amiss right from the start as they're most likely dealing

with everything with the mindset of a being gate guardians. The other time with the Marquis' residence was fine, but regarding these guards' current mentality, Hifumi only felt irritation come gushing forth.

He wordlessly walked closer to the guards, which they quickly discovered. But seeing that he didn't draw his weapon, they relaxed. That too, made Hifumi displeased.

"Okay, that's minus points."

The moment Hifumi put his hand on the hilt of his katana, the guards tensed up again. But he slashed their throats in succession, and they died without being able to raise their voices.

Slipping in through the unlocked gate, there was a huge door straight ahead. There were no guards in the garden, but inside the house were the presence of ten or so people.

Hifumi carefully observed for a while, but it didn't look like it was a trap.

Gripping the katana in his right hand, he boldly opened the front door.

Opening the door, he met eyes with a young, slender male servant.

"Eh, who are..."

"I'm an intruder."

Saying that, rather than waiting for an answer, Hifumi swiftly emerged

behind the servant. After putting him in a choke hold and tripping him, Hifumi dragged him into the shadows of the staircase close by.

“Answer my questions in a low voice. If you do any strange movements, I’ll kill you and find someone else to ask.”

With an arm around his neck, the servant trembled while nodding.

“Where are Ortis and the Corporal?”

“R-right now, they are in the office on the s-second floor...”

After pressing him for information of where the office was located, Hifumi had the servant tell him if he knew about a man named

Beirevra.

“T-that’s...”

Hifumi felt that the response was weird, so he threatened him by sliding the blade over his chest, lightly cutting it.

“Uu... p-please stop...”

“If you want me to stop, speak.”

“The man called Beirevra previously stayed here in this mansion.”

Finding a clue like this from an unexpected source, Hifumi’s irritation calmed down somewhat, urging the man to continue.

It seems that the servant was working with matters regarding the

town's budget management.

As for Beirevra, he had apparently been coming here several times. The most recent visit seems to have been this morning.

Perhaps the voice Alyssa heard back then was him.

Hifumi had previously thought that Beirevra would make a quick escape, but it seems like he's taking his sweet time.

Not having stayed over during the night, Beirevra had apparently come early in the morning, and left right after talking to Ortis about something.

As it didn't seem like he'd get any more information out of this,

Hifumi strangled the guy, making him fall unconscious.

He first had thoughts of killing him, but it didn't seem appropriate.

While feeling irritated, and regretting having accepted this task, Hifumi climbed up the stairs.

Without hesitating, Hifumi opened the door to the office and stepped inside.

There were two persons inside the room. The Corporal he met during the day, and a middle aged man. Presumably Ortis.

"It's you."

The Corporal uttered while brandishing his sword, stepping towards Hifumi with heavy steps.

“I have no need for you...”

When he came into striking distance, Hifumi trampled down on the top of his foot, and thrust him down on the ground before crushing his ankle.

While the Corporal was clumsily trying to stand up, Hifumi stepped down on his chest and pierced his neck with the katana, delivering the finishing blow.

“Well then. Ortis, I presume? I’ve got a couple of questions for you.”

Facing Hifumi who just killed a man without a changing of

expression, Ortis face turned pale, and he shakily stood up from the table.

“I-if you think you can behave like this to me, don’t think you can get awa...”

“I don’t need you to tell me that.”

Swinging the blade, a red line appeared on both of Ortis’ arms.

“Hiiii!?”

“Too bad we don’t have time. I’m getting a bit tired, so I’d like to finish this. Just killing a few people, I can’t feel the tension anymore.”

Hifumi complained about the annoying job he got.

“W-what do you want to know?”

“There are a few things. Who is Beirevra, where did he go, and what is he doing? I also want to know why the town’s soldiers are acting weird. The ones I killed earlier where lacking emotional ups and downs, and had a dull sense of pain. What was done to them?

“Be-Beirevra is a spy sent from the capital of Vichy. Where he is and what he’s doing, I don’t know...”

“You met him this morning, didn’t you? What did you talk about? What has he been tasked with?”

Listening to what Ortis was saying while flicking with his katana, Hifumi was arranging the

information in his head.

Apparently, Beirevra was an agent dispatched from the Capital of the so called city-state, and it seems like he mainly asked Ortis about the intelligence collected from Orsongrande. Though he was never told the contents concerning Orsongrande's internal activities.

As for the soldiers, it seems it was an experiment of a newly developed magic tool sent from the Capital.

It was also something Beirevra brought with him, with effects that could strengthen the body, which he distributed amongst the soldiers.

"So, is the suppression of emotions a side effect from that?"

“I don’t know either. I asked the Capital for an explanation, but ‘watch over the process’ is all they told me. It didn’t hinder my work so…”

“Alyssa wasn’t equipped with one of those magic tools?”

According to the information Ortis got, apparently they can’t bear the body strengthening if they’re too young.

“For now, that’s all I wanted to ask.”

“For now? Are you planning to come back!?”

“No, you’re the one coming.”

Hitting him hard on the back of his neck with the back of the katana,

Ortis consciousness was let go.

Exiting the originally sparsely guarded mansion, Hifumi returned with a horse carriage. He entrusted Origa and the rest with tying up Ortis, while he himself entered the inn.

Ahead of him was the inn owner's room.

Opening the door, the old man was snoring in bed, not noticing Hifumi intruding.

Drawing his katana, he stabbed the sleeping old man in the heart, before flicking the blood off the blade and returning it to its sheath.

He then left the room without saying anything.

“Something you had forgotten?”

“Just tying up some loose ends.”

Answering Origa’s question, Hifumi jumped up on his horse, announcing they were leaving the town, going towards Fukaroru.

“Master, are we returning?”

“According to what Ortis said, Beirevra is a spy from the Capital of Vichy. The current situation could affect negotiations between countries, but it’s a bother, so I’ll leave the investigation to Pajou and them. That aside, Alyssa.”

“Y-yes!”

“Like I said earlier, we’re returning to Orsongrande for now. As for what we’re doing after that, we’ll decide when the time arrives. Are you really planning on coming with us?”

Not just the town, but you’d be discarding even your country, he told her. But Alyssa just responded with a resolute nod.

“I don’t mind. My resolution stretches beyond that.”

“I see. Just do as you like.”

“We’ll be counting on you, Alyssa.”

“Following this Master is difficult, you know? You have to work hard.”

While Alyssa was getting along with

the slaves, Hifumi said he'd drive, and turned his back to Alyssa, before jumping up the coachman seat. The wagon started to advance on the road, and Hifumi let out a smile, unbeknownst to the others.

This is good. If Alyssa also can learn my way of fighting, it should be possible to spread the spirit of war throughout the country.
Throughout the world.

Maybe because Origa and Kasha originally had some previous experience, Hifumi thought that teaching them was going fairly well. This was just a simple experiment, but if they just got a bit more familiar with his teachings, they'd be able to enter the ranks of the quite strong people in this world.

Alyssa on the other hand couldn't use magic, and was by no means physically strong. But if he could prove that she could fight on an above average level due to martial arts and tactics, the way the world waged war was bound to experience change.

Whether it be individually, in group, town or country, without being able to choose the means themselves, their true struggle for life would begin.

For that purpose, having some kind of social status may be for the best, Hifumi thought. A status able to mobilize a lot of people. In other words, a status being able to start huge battles.

Since I somehow managed to get the rank of Patrician, let's finally put it to use. Imeraria, you planned to summon a hero, didn't you? Then I'll become your hero. A hero whose name resounds throughout the world. I'm really looking forward to what degree of bloodshed that will result in.

The excitement of strife, of battle. The tension of the night raids. Desperately fending for oneself, killing the ones failing to... Just imagining it, Hifumi got a warm feeling in his chest.

Cutting a motionless scarecrow would be boring. I want to kill because they're alive.

I want to mold the world, in order

to kill, the summoned hero secretly decided for himself.

Chapter 23: Runaway

“Let’s go!” (Hifumi)

Approaching the town’s exit, Hifumi called out sharply while holding his katana and galloping on his horse.

“Just a moment!” (Kasha)

Kasha, who was the coachman, raised the speed of the carriage in a hurry but it wasn’t a speed that could catch up to Hifumi no matter how.

In an instant they were separated. Hifumi vanished into the darkness

in front. One of the heads of the three soldiers in front of the gate was severed. In the act of passing each other, it was cut and sent flying.

While using the momentum of killing him, Hifumi turned around and once again hurried on his horse. Slashing his katana from atop of the horseback, he killed yet another person.

Just one single soldier was left now. As the carriage arrived, the soldier was at last being successful in drawing his sword, the carriage arrived.

“Alyssa, get off.” (Hifumi)

Hifumi dismounted from the horse

and pointed his katana into the direction of the soldier to keep him in check. Without shifting his attention he addressed Alyssa.

At once Alyssa jumped down from the carriage.

Immediately following after the forceful healing with restorative medicines, she didn't seem to have any problems with movement.

"I am lending this to you." (Hifumi)

Coming close to Alyssa, Hifumi passed on his katana to her.

"Huh? ..." (Alyssa)

Though the soldier came slashing at them, he was easily forced back with a front kick causing him to be

thrown down.

“Kill this guy with this.” (Hifumi)

“Th-that is ...” (Alyssa)

Although Alyssa received the katana, she was hesitating upon being told to kill the soldier.

Maybe she recognized his face.

Once more throwing himself upon them, the soldier approached. Having a short blade driven into the inner side of his sword arm’s wrist, the soldier dropped his sword. Hifumi grabbed the back of his neck and pulled him down.

Immediately trying to get up again, Hifumi firmly stepped down on his elbow. Due to the build of a human

being, the soldier wasn't able to get up any more.

"From now on you will kill a lot of opponents. The person you just yesterday had a friendly chat with, might have to be killed today. First off, kill this guy. Kill the opponent that tried to kill you, in order to completely separate from this place." (Hifumi)

Without any hesitation, Hifumi spoke those words. Catching her breath, Alyssa set up the katana without losing any time.

"That's fine. Up until this morning he was your colleague, but now that he betrayed and tried to kill you he is an enemy. If you won't kill him, he will kill you." (Hifumi)

Although those were clichéd words, they were effective on Alyssa who had experienced it by herself.

Upon lifting her head, there was no trace of indecision left within Alyssa's eyes.

"I am borrowing this sword." (Alyssa)

Alyssa thrust the katana at the soldier who was still continuing to struggle.

The sharpened point of the katana penetrated with a smooth, unhindered motion into the back of his head ending his life simply like that.

"... I have done it." (Alyssa)

“You did well. Next we move to the national border.” (Hifumi)

Hifumi gently took the katana from Alyssa’s hands and replaced it with the sword of the dead soldier. Turning his back on her, he went towards the horse.

“Hifumi-san, I, did I do something good with this?” (Alyssa)

“... There is no good or bad. I told you what you should do and you decided yourself to do so. That’s all there is to it.” (Hifumi)

Wearing an expression that showed she didn’t quite understand, Alyssa went back to the carriage trudging with the sword in her hand.

The first step went smoothly,

Hifumi thought.

Only after killing a person from Vichy for the first time, I was going to decide the future depending on Alyssa's reaction.

If her spirit was broken by this, I would have chosen a suitable place to leave her behind afterwards.

However, beyond my expectations, Alyssa regarded the Vichy soldier with a powerful hostile spirit.

Although she might have been conflicted within her heart, when the attack came this way earlier, she resolved herself and put her heart into balance.

Not parting with the sword that was stolen from the killed opponent is a

proof that she hasn't abandoned her will to fight on yet.

Although there was a chance that she might bare his fangs at him, that in itself would be enjoyable as well. While laughing to himself, Hifumi returned atop the horse and they left the town behind by passing through the unmanned gate.

– National Border –

On Orsongrande's side and Vichy's side, both somehow managed to allocate soldiers taking charge to a certain degree within a few days.

From now on, all that was left was to increase the number of personnel coming here as it is. They

would be divided back into their original unit upon returning.

On the Orsongrande's border side, besides soldiers coming there was one more person, a knight.

It was Pajou.

In order to fully investigate the abnormal situation, she intended to stay here as visitor for a few days.

Currently, the corpse of the criminal who made his appearance here first and the corpse of Gothras, who was slain by Hifumi, were to be examined, as she was in the process of writing down the report.

"After all Vichy hasn't formed an alliance with Horant yet, I wonder if they are not simply being used? The

number of personnel loitering on their side of the border is identical to ours, was it only to experiment on the magic tool? But why? Acting in such way would make them enemies of two countries at the same time ..."(Pajou)

As it is extremely unlikely to think about matters coherently with a worn out mind, I have to soon take a rest, Pajou thought, just as a scream reached her ears from a distance.

It seemed like there was someone fighting on the other side of the border.

"Good grief, there is no time to take a rest at all." (Pajou)

While cursing, Pajou quickly equipped her armor and sword and rushed out of her own room.

The light of the dim torch only illuminated the necessary minimum of the location.

Basically the border wasn't passed at night.

It was possible to fail to notice things in the darkness and judgement grew dull, too.

Rarely there were merchants and such who arrived at night due to ending up making a mistake in their planning. They pass the time by camping a little bit away before devoting themselves to passing through the border in the morning.

Today it wasn't such a idiotic merchant but an assailant appearing.

"Listen! Annihilate the soldiers on the Vichy side! Do not leave one person alive!" (Hifumi)

While riding the horse, Hifumi swung the fundou of the kusarigama (T/N: If you don't know what that means, reread the earlier chapters.)

"Plunge deeply up to the fortress with the carriage as it is! Immediately after disembarking, kill the group in the vicinity!" (Hifumi)

""""Understood!""""

Approaching the fortress, the two

soldiers were setting up large shields side-by-side blocking the road.

“Stop!” (Guard)

“Who would stop here!” (Hifumi)

Magnificently jumping with his horse over the two soldiers, Hifumi wrapped the chain around the necks of the two defenseless soldiers in one go from overhead and dragged them down.

“Ha ha~ !” (Hifumi)

After about 10 meters of pulling them along, they were discarded. At the time of dragging them down, both of them had died by having their necks broken already.

The horses pulling the carriage quickly evaded the shields the soldiers dropped as they were hurrying on. The wheels of the main part of the carriage ran aground causing it to violently shake.

“Kya!” (Origa)

Origa having been thrown off balance was right away caught by Alyssa.

“T-Thank you.” (Origa)

While expressing her thanks, Origa noticed the quivering of Alyssa’s hand as she was touching her.

“Ano …” (Alyssa)

“It’s alright. Master is here and

were are quite strong, too, okay?" (Origa)

Therefore it was fine, while gently smiling, Origa tightly held her magic staff as she was aiming for the right timing to jump off the carriage.

Suddenly the velocity of the carriage dropped.

"You are a hindrance!" (Kasha)

Apparently Kasha dealt with the enemy in front.

Hearing the voice, Origa immediately jumped off and although hesitating, Alyssa followed right after.

Disembarking from the back of the

carriage, the pair faced the enemies separated to the left and right.

Having seen the moment arriving when the carriage plunged into the fortress, Hifumi left the horse after dismounting from it. He grabbed the head of a soldier, who was confronting Kasha, approaching him from the back and casually threw him at the fortress wall.

With only that, the soldier died.

Furthermore, he hit the soldier coming from his right side with the hilt of the katana causing him to become dizzy and then penetrated the blade through the eyes thus killing him.

“Gi!”

Clenching his teeth, the soldier raised his voice in death agony before dying after convulsing.

“Master ...” (Kasha)

“Follow Alyssa.” (Hifumi)

Ignoring Kasha, who wanted to say something, Hifumi increased the corpse count while approaching the border.

“Orsongrande’s soldiers! Listen!” (Hifumi)

In a very very loud voice.

That voice of Hifumi, albeit yet quite a distance off the border, was heard by Pajou.

“This voice ...” (Pajou)

“I am an Orsongrande noble called by the name Hifumi! Some of you soldiers should already know of me! Our country’s Viscount Hagenti was arrested! Do you know the reason for that?!” (Hifumi)

Hifumi’s voice carried over well.

Confirming the situation on the other side of the border, Orsongrande’s soldiers had heard it properly.

“Viscount Hagenti is a puppet of Vichy! Upon Princess Imeria’s decree I secretly infiltrated Vichy while risking my life. Viscount Kano was manipulated by Vichy. Again and again soldiers, who were manipulated by inhuman magic, showed up in our country and I was

able to obtain evidence of their schemes! And furthermore Vichy tried to kill a young woman, who learnt of the secret behind the magic tool performance, too!" (Hifumi)

While talking, Hifumi killed two more soldiers.

Having displayed his abilities to some of the Orsongrande's soldiers, there were some amongst them starting to believe that him having received the Princess' secret decree wasn't strange at all either.

"Although it was dangerous, I succeeded in rescuing her from the crisis! But, in doing so my circumstances ended up being revealed! Though I somehow

managed to defeat the pursuers, it is regrettable that I can't pass here!" (Hifumi)

As the soldiers turned their line of sight, there was a figure of a young woman desperately fighting while helping Origa and Kasha.

It was no one else but Alyssa.

"Soldiers of Orsongrande! Even though the national border is right ahead, there is no way to climb over the huge rock cliff! Don't mind us, but at the very least lend us your assistance to rescue this young woman! For the sake of saving her, I want all of you to display your righteousness!" (Hifumi)

As they were addressed by Hifumi,

the soldiers looked at each others faces while wavering.

... What is he planning? ... (Pajou)

As she would before long arrive at the fortress, Pajou was perplexed on the way.

I don't believe that Hifumi requires any reinforcement to begin with.

Then, why is Hifumi trying to have Orsongrande's soldiers cross the border?

As far as soldiers protecting the border are concerned, that is a heavy crime.

Rather, the significance behind doing so is a lot more serious than an ordinary person doing so.

However it can't be expected of Hifumi to know about that, Pajou considered.

Having arrived at the fortress myself, what would I decide to do in this situation?

If you think calmly about it, it will be unwise for knights and soldiers to cross the border of another country and thus invade it.

Even more so if the person they tried to rescue was someone having committed a crime in the other country.

No matter what, it is impossible.

However, choosing to not save them in this situation, the matter of not helping women and the matter of

“not helping one’s own country’s citizens,” these two matters will still remain as facts.

Rather than a knight, it might have bad consequences if the general soldiers lose their trust in the country. Likewise these facts will get around to the normal citizens, too.

Protecting the rules and thus disheartening the retainers or deciding to put the priority on saving lives, huh? ...

Finally arriving at the fortress, Pajou was surprised to find out that the young woman Hifumi had specified was no other than Alyssa. Furthermore a great number of corpses could be instantly seen

having fallen on the other side of the border. She recalled Hifumi's speech he gave just now.

『Although my circumstances became known, I managed to defeat the pursuers.』

If that was true, it was a matter of "Protecting a fleeing criminal who, while heading in the direction of Orsongrande, killed Vichy's soldiers en route."

The intervention by Orsongrande has already become a fact due to that.

Though I am not certain to what extent the other party is aware of matters, the significance to refrain from transgressing the border has

already been lost.

Since it has come to this, we have to retrieve them no matter what it takes. It has also become necessary to tailor a beautiful tale about this. (Pajou)

Orsongrande is in the right. There is no other choice but vaguely denounce Vichy publicly, Pajou judged.

“All hands, draw your swords and assist them!” (Pajou)

Naturally holding a weapon too, Pajou started to run as vanguard. The other soldiers followed as well.

The reason was that the person-in-charge made the assessment.

Because of that their caution was easily dismissed.

Due to the fierce attack by the Orsongrande's side with their overwhelming numbers, the number of Vichy soldiers decreased in a blink of an eye.

After all Vichy soldiers had been killed, Hifumi, who crossed the border, expressively showed his thanks towards Pajou.

"It was a very courageous behavior. I wish to express my gratitude." (Hifumi)

"No, please don't worry about it. Leaving that aside, because I want to listen to the detailed report, come this way please." (Pajou)

To Pajou's guidance, Hifumi's group obediently followed.

Of course Hifumi was unhurt, the slaves and Alyssa too, to the degree of settling with a few scratched which hadn't to be minded.

Entering a vast conference room in the barracks close to the fortress, the soldiers standing guard were told to not let anyone enter for a while. Pajou urged on Hifumi's group to sit down.

After confirming that Hifumi's group had sat down, she sat down on a chair herself too while breathing a heavy sigh.

"Somehow you seem to be quite worn out." (Hifumi)

“Who’s fault do you think that is? ... So, usually I would expect you to explain right away, but ...” (Pajou)

“Catch it.” (Hifumi)

Retrieving a document from his darkness storage, Hifumi casually tossed it to Pajou.

After quickly looking through it, Pajou hung her head in shame and looked down from the corner of her eyes.

“Though it was impossible to read some parts, it seems that the lot at the central government of Vichy have used a magic tool from Horant to strengthen their soldiers. If those two countries succeed in cooperating, they are geographically

the same as Orsongrande?” (Hifumi)

“In case this is real, you could say that ...” (Pajou)

As Pajou was visibly squeezing out those words, Hifumi delivered the final blow.

“So, the representative of the town Aroseru, who received this as well, was arrested. He is still alive. He was left within the carriage.” (Hifumi)

“Isn’t that kidnapping!” (Pajou)

As Pajou slammed on the desk and stood up, Hifumi said without changing his expression.

“Did you have to expressively raise

your voice so it could be heard by others? This was done rightly in order to completely save her from almost being killed at that place. With having this much evidence, the guy who can testify the validity of the document is here. What do you want to say before making a move? Vichy will reject everything like that." (Hifumi)

"This judgement will be made by the royalty and the high ranking nobles, not by those on site." (Pajou)

"No, not at all, you have decided on site just a little while ago. The situation has already started to develop. It's too late now." (Hifumi)

Upon Hifumi's words, Pajou

couldn't do anything but watch his face in silence.

Olga's group, who were sitting lined up next to Hifumi, likewise were silent having their breath taken away after becoming aware of how their actions had developed into such serious affair.

"... Anyway, please stay at the barracks today. I will submit a report to the royal capital." (Pajou)

"Ah, there was the option to use birds as means of communication. Well then, while you are contacting the capital, please arrange for us to meet Imeria. Let's see, 『The man, who accomplished the secret decree while also ending up breaking the law in order to save a maiden,

wishes to visit Her Highness in order to express his apology』."
(Hifumi)

Wearing a doubtful expression, Pajou looked at Hifumi's face.

What is he scheming? Pajou tried to possibly read his mind. He was floating a faint smile without change as he caught her gaze.

Chapter 24: Welcome To The Black Parade

At the break of dawn Hifumi and the others had departed the border. After simply passing through Fokalore, they quickly, they sped towards the Imperial Capital.

After storing their carriage away, they proceeded on horseback. Origa and the others were not carrying people, so Alyssa clung to Hifumi's back riding the same horse.

「Goshujin-sama, what would you be planning to do from now on?」

「As Pajo had said, I will meet Imeraria. I'll summarize the matters at that point, so do wait until then. And though it may be early, but upon reaching the capital I intend to discuss your release; so I intend.」

「But if we don't catch Beirevra, we won't be able to prove our innocence, would we?」

Her horse running parallel, Kasha looked back on the road representing the bright and cheerful days.

「Beirevra's name appears in the documents procured from Vichy. Labeling him as the Center's Spy, even. And though Arycelle's testimony, who is being escorted as

we speak, is also necessary, what we have and know should suffice for the time being.」

The Vichy conspiracy of the Viscount led to two women adventurers falsely accused and reduced to mere slaves. These two girls were singled out by the quasi-knight and adventurer with a secret mission Hifumi, and even rescued a girl who was about to be killed by her allies.

Furthermore, the declaration to the rest of the country had also been decided, prompting Pajo to request that they pass along this message to Imeraria.

「 Will it be alright? 」

Listening to Hifumi's explanation, Alyssa felt as if she were being treated as some tragic heroine.

After reaching the Capital's vicinity without a major problem, they saw a number of knights standing beside the road.

「Yo, it's been a while」

One of the knights was Midas.

Dropping of his horse, Hifumi raised his hand and called out.

「It has been a long time, Hifumi-san」

「　　What's up, why so formal?」

「It's not about me. The information Hifumi-san had

delivered.... It has caused the Imperial Castle to fall into a panic. For the time being, Queen Imeraria herself has announced this incident to the people, and has decided to reward you for your efforts. 」

Hifumi neither planned nor wanted neighboring countries to find the current absence of a king and financial difficulty as an ideal time to push their luck. However, the current state was too bizarre for them to ignore. Thus, using the Queen's permit and the fact that he had entered Vichy quite a few times, Hifumi had chosen to bring about some grand result and immobilize them by proclaiming Vichy's errors.

Up to this point, Imeraria should

have amassed quit some support. She was manipulating the temporary, just-crowned prince and guiding the nation as its true leader.

「 Moreover, they have been discussing the matter of your promotion 」

「 Whether I will become a knight? 」

「 No that... 」

Hifumi, who had already become a rumor in the guild, was so flashy in dealing with Vichy that the castle town broke out into wild revelries. With no one discussing the possibility of war, proclaiming him a hero who had appeared during this peaceful time, the common folk

could not help but feel touched but a story of a young man carrying out women's tragic revenge and saving them in the process.

So to punish Hifumi now, considering that the citizens are still recovering from their King's sudden death, would only lead to animosity between the people and the crown.

「Though it is not yet decided, the title is bound to be well above a common knight. We have come to escort Hifumi-san to the castle and protect you from the crowd. Contrary to our expectations, you have arrived quite quickly.」

And, "since you'll be promoted to a rank above a knight—above me,

some will call you a hero and others will give outright ignore you”
Midas’ bitter smile seemed to convey; Hifumi acknowledged and asked for a carriage to be prepared.

「Frankly, we too had thought that Hifumi-san would be moving more discretely. Even after becoming a noble, we had figured you wanted a freer lifestyle...」

「Don’t expect me to move according the wishes of nobles or countries」

After a carriage had been prepared, Hifumi jumped on his horse and looking down on Midas, laughed.

「I had intended to create this situation.」

「Eh?」

「Even so, I did not expect to stand out this much. Well, it's been a long time; let's go meet Imeraria.」

Hifumi went off ahead, and Midas hurried to catch up.

A large group of people had gathered by the front gate awaiting the hero's return.

Whether prompted by a lack of happenings in the past years, and due to the rumor that Hifumi would be soon arriving, the people had gathered at the gate to catch a glimpse of this hero who fought for justice and save the two enslaved "beauties" and the "lovely girl."

Even when the King had passed

away suddenly from illness, the people did not react with such interest; and though the fact that it was a funeral, the castle town's silence could be attributed to the fact that they took it as a stranger's problem.

The people even brought out food stalls, displaying the strength of the city's economic appetite.

「 In some sense, I too am a traitor from Vichy, but I had not expected this kind of welcome... 」

Alyssa, who was in the cart, began crying from nervousness upon seeing the great uproar that the city was in.

「 Seems like we Kasha and I won't

be treated as Goshujin-sama's extras this time around.」

「Seriously, it will be what it will be. I often don't understand what Goshujin is thinking, but I can't do anything about it at this point.」

From Hifumi and Midas' conversation, the three understood that they too had to accompany Hifumi to the castle. Which caused them to worry.

Sitting in the coachmen's seat, having just admitted to giving up on understanding Hifumi's ways, Kasha felt anxious to enter the Castle for the first time.

And while the wheels of the carriage turned, the gates opened

releasing a flood people, who, as if finally having found Hifumi's group, raised their voices.

「Kasha. Stop for a second in front of the gate」

「Understood」

Nodding to Hifumi's instructions, Kasha dropped the speed.

And coming straight to the gate, stopping his horse, Hifumi addressed the crowd.

「Open me a path! I must go atone for my sins to Her Highness Imeraria!」

The people, who had been awaiting a hero's triumphant return, were bewildered by his words. They

turned to each other, murmuring.

「I have heard from the knights who had come to meet me. That you have come to accept me most favorable. And you have my gratitude! But, I have crossed the border, and killed a man to save a little girl. Thus, I have exceeded my authority and betrayed Her Highness' trust... For this reason, I have come to confess my sin and accept my punishment!」

The commotion only exasperated.

「But these girls are not at fault! So I have come to tell Her Highness! Should I perish at the gallows tomorrow, I but ask that you welcome these girls warmly in my place!」

Imploring the people with grand gestures, o how did Hifumi appear to the people! Although he too was a noble, for the sake of the people... no, for the sake of slaves and people of another country he was willing to accept a punishment, and to save them—appear before the queen.

Moreover, upon his urging Arisa and Origa leaned out of the carriage. Including the driver, these were the girls he intended to protect; their young faces evoked in the people a desire to protect the girls.

「 Those children are the slaves you say... 」

「 They were made slaves by those bastards at Vichy you know! 」

「That knight-sama, though he is a little short, what a wonderful man」

「His aura is very different from other knights, no?」

「They were going to kill that little girl?」

「What demons those bastards at Vichy are!」

A murmur of truth and gossip spread among the crowd, but every mouth sang Hifumi praise and expressed pity for Origa and the other girls.

While the murmur continued to spread, Hifumi urged his horse forward – intending to meet the Queen – and bowed slightly

requesting the people to clear him the way.

The gathering parted creating a path from the gate all the way to the royal castle.

And with a humble expression on his faith, Hifumi continued forward.

When he looked back, he saw Kasha frozen from anxiety in the coachman's seat, and Midas' corps with a sour expression on their faces.

As they advanced through the street, myriad voices called to Midas' group asking them to save Hifumi. Unable to accept nor deny the request, the knights decided to avoided making eye contact with

anyone in the crowd which only increased the people's anxiety; as a result, the crowd only grew louder.

(The knights too are unused to this, huh. Now then, what are the Queen's thoughts?)

When Hifumi raised his gaze to the castle he saw a single girl standing on the balcony.

When Hifumi passed through the castle gate, the steel gate closed behind him.

Since he was advanced leisurely through the city, the people faithfully led him all the way to the castle. On the other side of the gate, some loudly petitioned the crown for mercy while others loudly

criticized it.

Hifumi got off his horse, and the three girls exited the carriage.

「Please leave the horses to me. If you please, meet with her Highness」

「Alright」

Leaving the horses to Midas, they were lead into the castle by a single knight.

The knights on the inside, unlike the time when Hifumi had first left the castle, were now looking at him with gazes full of wonder.

Since their gazes were also focused on Alyssa, Origa, and Kasha, the girls felt ill at ease.

「 Please wait in this room 」

The knight said, and the maid opened the door.

Prior to entering, Hifumi said,

「 Thank you for showing me in. But the three people hiding inside the room, you're a bother: get out 」

Feeling the presence of a few people inside the room, the maid look inquisitively at Hifumi—having no idea what he was talking about, but the knight started to tremble.

Pajo and Midas would not do something like this, but the first division of the castle knights must not have heard yet of Hifumi's abilities.

「 W-what are you... 」

「 Don't play dumb... well, I guess it's fine 」

After entering the room, Hifumi stabbed his blade into the wall behind a decorative vase and the wall on the other side—decorated by a painting.

He could hear some muffled voices on the other side, and blood flowed from the floor.

「 The guy in the ceiling seems to have run off, huh. You—I won't be as forgiving next time 」

Stunned by Hifumi's performance, the knights looked towards the place where their comrades now lay dead, and left in a panic.

The maid, unable to understand the transpired, just stood dumbfounded.

「 Could I get some tea? For a few people 」

「 P-please wait a moment! 」

Calling out to the maid, Hifumi flopped onto the sofa. He didn't really have an attitude of someone who came to attone for his sins.

「 You haven't forgiven any of them 」

「 I did forgive that guy, though? 」

While retorting to Kasha's comment, talking about the ceiling guy whom he let go, Hifumi tossed the katana into the storage.

「You guys sit down, too. We still have lots of work to do」

Perhaps wondering why the tea was late, Hifumi stretched his body with an aloof expression on his face; seeing this, the girls' anxiety could only grow.

「Her Royal Highness, Queen Imeraria!」

While Hifumi was casually sipping some tea, a maid knocked on the door and so announced.

And after the maid moved from the door, Imeraria entered. Seeing two pools of blood, she frowned.

「Please have the knight who escorted him here brought before later」

She told the maid who placed the tea at her seat, and ordered that no one is to enter this chamber for a while. Imeraria then sat facing Hifumi.

She was just as dignified and beautiful as when they had first met.

「It's been a while, eh. I heard you're handling things pretty well around here」

「If possible, I would have preferred not to meet you... but I have caused you great inconvenience with Duke Lagraen's and Viscount Hagenti's incidents. Moreover, the men here have also acted excessively...」

Imeraria directed her gaze at the blood stained floorboards.

「 Don't sweat it. Besides, I'm putting your third knight corps to good use 」

「 Now then, you have something to tell me? 」

「 Ah, before that, I believe there's something on your mind, no? 」

Sighing heavily, the Queen's eyes wandered off Hifumi and focused on Alyssa.

「 So you would be Alyssa, right? I have received the report 」

「 Y-yes! Umm... what... what is my fate? 」

With a gentle smile, Imeraria tried to convey as much gentleness in her voice as possible,

「Don't worry. You will be treated as this country's citizen. If you so desire, how about working here in the castle?」

「Umm, about that... I have yet to repay my debt to Hifumi-san....」

「I see. Feel free to come to my side at any time」

「T-thank you...」

Smiling at Alyssa one more time, Imeraria returned her gaze to Hifumi.

「You have handled things well, I see」

「 Yeah, somehow 」

「 That was sarcasm 」

「 I know 」

Sipping her tea, Imeraria continued.

「 I have received Pajo's report. Since it came from her, it covers the information contained in the documents in your possession. And thanks to the commotion outside, my hands are rather tied, so I'll have to recognize Hifumi-sama as a hero and have our ambassadors to Vichy and Holanto pass along some unpleasant news to them 」

Moreover, Imeraria continued,

「 Origa-san, Kasha-san 」

「Yes!」

Origa replied while Kasha stood poised.

「Because of this country's putrid nobles you have found yourself degraded to slaves; as a representative of the royal family who controls the nobles, I express my deepest apology. I apologize for my inability to do so publicly and hope that you will accept my apology」

「Your Highness, while we do regret becoming slaves, we have not faced any misfortune after being bought by Goshujin-sama. Moreover, we were able, with these hands of ours, to carry out revenge...」

Kasha merely nodded at Origa's words, unable to decide whether or not she had the right to address the Queen herself. Honestly, however, like Alyssa, she was rather poor with words.

「 Your words put my heart at ease. Since yours is a special case, I will have the castle magicians release your slave crest. We'll have this done immediately, so please live freely from now on 」

「 We thank you for showing such unexpected benevolence 」

Origa and Kahsa deeply lowered their heads.

「 Furthermore, I would like to have Hifumi-sama become a Viscount

and rule over Fokalore and the surrounding villages in place of Viscount Hagenti.」

「Oh? I have come to receive a punishment though?」

「Please stop joking around. If we were to punish Hifumi we would lose the goodwill of the people. Did you seriously expect me to do something so thoughtless?」

Hifumi was once again taken aback by how well Imeraria carried herself as a statesperson. At the same time, he decided to make as much use of her as he could.

「My bad. I'll gladly accept the title. Nor could I hope for a better land」

「Hope? Are you planning

something again?」

Imeraria asked with concern on her face; Hifumi merely sipped some tea and answered.

「I will crush Vichy. So gruesomely that they will never think to cross paths me again」

And the look on his face stole everyone's breath away...

Chapter 25: Take A Look Around

The Vichy central committee is run by 5 committees representing the 5 large cities, popularly abbreviated to “Centre” in Vichy.

Basically every city recognises it’s own local authority that has a structure to it.

A liason from the centre is sent to each city, while on the surface a perfect observation system for the centre, a perfect cover for spies. For that reason, a city-state trying to withdraw from Vichy had not happened for more than 50 years....

「 What on earth...? What is going on! 」

In the central committee's simply decorated yet dignified conference room, a corpulent fat man raised his voice.

「 This clamour is pointless. First it is necessary to gather information. 」

「 In any case, the representative for Arusel is unaccounted for. According to the observer sent, most of the soldiers seem to have been killed. Collecting information will take time. 」

「 While we're being slow, Orsongrande is possibly starting something. 」

「 Impossible. There is no reason for strife, nor is there any indication of such from their goods circulation. 」

The central committee members exchanged several opinions, “It seems that many of Arosel’s troops have been murdered” being the predominant theme.

Legally speaking, protests should be lodged with Orsongrande, but cannot for lack of evidence.

「 Excuse me! 」

A soldier rushed into the unsettled conference room carrying an official document.

「 What? We’re in the middle of a meeting right now. 」

「 That is.... A letter of protest has reached our country from Orsongrande. 」

「 Letter of protest!? 」

A man stood up hitting the desk, his large stomach wobbling, and snatched the document from the soldier.

「 Th-This... 」

Seeing the man at a loss for words, a female committee member took the document from him and looked it over.

「 Let me see... 」

According to the document from Orsongrande, the committee of Horant had obtained magic tools

that twisted human nature, the city-state had also issued instructions for the death of an innocent woman. Furthermore, a protest against using these magic tools for aggressive behaviour within Orsongrande territory, backed up with evidence and an eyewitness.

Moreover, Orsongrande called out the high-handedness of the city-state's central committee over time and questioning the independent actions carried out under their jurisdiction, calling for allies to separate from Vichy, ending with telling the central committee to come down hard on this in the name of justice.

「 This is no protest, it's a declaration of war! 」

「 Why in the world.... 」

「 Immediately contact every city and tell them not to reply to this joke of a protest from Orsongrande. 」

「 Definitely..... You! Immediately notify our contacts in every city! 」

「 Yes! Understood! 」

The soldier who brought the document immediately rushed out of the conference room.

「 This is a great danger for Vichy. If by some chance a city-state emerges considering separating..... 」

「 I think that is quite unlikely. I don;t know about here, but

establishing an independent nation won;t be considered in other city-states. 」

「 Is that so? ..... Considering the military forces, the beastmen tribe area and the Horant side have more troops present. If you think about it, our country will not be affected to that extent. 」

Relief filled the conference room for a while, but the interaction with Orsongrande had yet to be decided.

The meeting ended with the decision of cooperation for the time being, albeit half-heartedly.

The future may have been different if they had taken a proactive defense regarding Orsongrande, but

with common sense was usually disregarded in favour of possible selfish gains.

It was Hifumi's second day at the castle. They had stayed over at the castle.

「 The assembly of the allied city-states is dispersed everywhere, an easy way to maintain stability and cooperation. With the right cooperation, economy grows well. However, every city-state will defend itself, and the patriotic feeling that every "country" has is much lower. 」

Hifumi explained while cheerfully munching on a steak in the morning.

The instigator of the protest document to Vichy was obviously him.

Sitting with him were Princess Imeraria and Alyssa. Origa and Kasha had been released from slavery.

Even though they were freed, they had not left Hifumi. With their revenge still unaccomplished, they were now employed exclusively by Hifumi as adventurers to travel with him. They strongly wished to accompany him so, Hifumi lightly said 「 Well then, you're hired. For now, until Beirevra is caught and killed. 」

Alyssa was employed as an attendant to Hifumi, who was

treated as a viscount. At any rate, she was relieved at having obtained a social position in this country. Once the promotion ceremony ends, they would go to the territory.

「 However, would the tentative explanation received be enough, I wonder..... 」

In contrast to Hifumi, Imeraria was clearly uneasy, reflected in her appetite.

The day Hifumi had returned to the castle, Imeraria made the document to send to Vichy as proposed by Hifumi. It was delivered to Vichy's central committee via the ambassador to Vichy who received it by pigeon and a fast horse. It would probably reach Vichy that

day or the next. That was the fastest level of communication in this world.

At the time, Hifumi told them to send the documents to each city in Vichy before the central committee began to move.

「 In any case, it is impossible to keep the movements of every city under surveillance. Unawares, the neighbouring city may be an enemy, amusing, isn't it. Besides, on examining the documents, the centre has a large number of troops. Due to this, each city will send their agents everywhere there is great influence and financial strength. The central committee will desperately scramble for control. 」

Imeraria was unable to object to Hifumi's words. After a brief consultation with the Prime Minister, it was hurriedly arranged. Though now doubts have come up with time. At the time, it was a hasty action, but at this point, could it be likened to a declaration of war?

「 At least the strength of their political system is nonexistent. Thanks to their council system, it'll lead to squabbles and it's unlikely that they will move for two weeks at the earliest. 」

While saying so, Hifumi rose. Origa, Kasha and Alyssa attempted to follow, but stopped when he signalled them not to.

「 Where to? 」

「 Shopping near the castle for a while. 」

Throwing up a hood to hide his face, Hifumi left the room as though he had not a care in the world.

「 Um.... 」

After Hifumi left the room, Alyssa opened her mouth. All eyes focused upon her.

「 About Hifumi-san, saying something extreme like crushing Vichy, but sending documents instead, seems rather gentle, isn't it? 」

「 Alyssa-san, as a noble's

attendant, your speech will require correction. 」

「 Auu.... 」

Alyssa instantly withered at Imeraria's quiet rebuke.

「 Apart from that, Mr. Hifumi's actions are not gentle at all. 」

「 What do you mean? 」

「 Mr. Hifumi probably intends to use divide and conquer to capture the city states. As a result of that, now when Vichy moves, the troops on the side joined with Horant will be fortified as per Mr. Hifumi's suggestion. 」

Apparently, there seemed to have been a discussion between Hifumi

and Imeraria.

「 That's what I said too, but the princess agreed to the confrontation with Vichy, no? 」

「 .... If Vichy isn't destroyed, this country will be. Will Mr Hifumi be violent here and cause it to collapse internally? Or will the circulation of goods from Vichy stop and cause the same? 」

Imeraria sighed as though she had no options.

「 Oh, the great Viscount-sama returns. 」

Hifumi had made his way to the shop that the dwarf Thorn managed.

「 How did you know? 」

「 It's on a bunch of flyers, a customer showed one to me. 」

The document that Thorn thrust at Hifumi detailed "the actions of the hero Hifumi in saving a woman from Vichy and bequeathing upon him the title of Viscount as a lord to defend the new border between Orsongrande and Vichy".

「 Hmm, even the parchment isn't of bad quality. 」

「 Apart from, that, would you like to make purchases.... or rather make another strange object? 」 (Thorn)

「 How rude. They are splendid battle tools. 」

While saying so, Hifumi pulled out several pieces of high-quality paper from his Dark Storage.

「 Hmph. 」

Bad attitude notwithstanding, Thorn's eyes sparkled with curiosity while looking over the papers.

「 What the heck!? 」

「 The dimensions are written there, as are the number of orders. 」

Blueprints for some tools and weapons were written on that paper.

「 Why do you want so much of this assembled? 」

「 If you want to see, come to Fokalore with me. The manner of fighting in this world. 」

「 Hmm, let me think about it. There are many orders, and the structure is quite complex. It will take around 2 weeks. 」

「 Do it in 10 days. 」

「 .... I'll have to call in an acquaintance. 」

After that, Hifumi went to the slave shop once again.

The same doorman was standing guard. He took one look at Hifumi and hastily scampered into the depths of the shop.

Almost immediately, the manager,

Uraru came out of the shop.

「 Hello hello, Hifumi-sama. Thank you very much for remembering this humble shop, please come in. 」

Led inside by Uraru, Hifumi sat down and mentioned the same conditions as last time, strength, regardless of age or sex, in addition to a new one.

「 It may be difficult, but a bright fellow is preferable. 」

「 Ha ha ha! Certainly, there won't be many smart slaves... Oops, keep that secret from Origa and Kasha please. Well then, I shall make preparations at once. 」

After waiting for a while, Uraru

returned and led Hifumi to a room with five people in it, of both genders.

Every single member was wearing simple padded tunics, all somewhat dirty.

「 These can read and write and count to some extent. 」

An embezzling bureaucrat, an accountant at a bankrupt hotel, various others who fell into slavery.

Talking to each one, addition and subtraction was possible, but few could do multiplication and division, it seemed to be the general standard for this world.

「 I'll buy them all. Clean them up and get them some new clothes on

me. Bring them to the castle tomorrow. 」

「 Certainly. Incidentally, why would you want educated slaves? 」

They call this level educated? (Hifumi)

「 Preparations are very important to fight to the heart's content. That aside, are there slaves skilful enough with their hands as much as a dwarf? 」

Uraru respctfuly inclined his head to Hifumi's enquiry.

「 Certainly, there are. 」

Exultantly returning to the castle, Hifumi gathered his girls [TN: I'm

tired of constantly writing all their names] and explained their next move.

「 In 10 days we will leave and go to Fokalore. It will be a routine visit of village territories. War omits nothing. 」

Hearing the word 'war', Alyssa flinched.

「 We will prepare till then, but first is the military unit formation. 100 men shall be divided into 4 corps, with a 30-30-30-10 composition. The last one will be the military supplies corps. 」

「 Mayor..? 」 [TN:'輜重隊' is military supplies corps, but is pronounced as 'シチョウタイ or

shichoutai' that apparently can mean a bunch of stuff. mayor is what I've got.]

「 Huh?..... 」(Kasha)

Apparently supplies were carried individually in this world, a unit for cooking and supplies does not seem to exist here.

「 Well now, I guess I'll have to explain. That unit will carry materials and food, and do all the cooking. For the remaining 3 corps, Origa, Kasha and Alyssa will be the commanders for the first, second and third respectively. 」

「 C-Commander, it's impossible for me! 」

Hifumi lightly bopped Alyssa on the

head as she stood up panicking.

「 The conventional methods of fighting are useless anyway, doesn't matter who the commander is. 」

「 Any of us are fine huh.... 」 (Origa)

「 No need to worry. In any case, you do not need to fight your opponent directly in the beginning. 」

「 What do you mean? 」

While answering Kasha's question, Hifumi pulled out a piece of paper and started writing on it.

「 If my expectations are correct, it'll be a siege that will involve the civilians as well. 」

「 The civilians.... 」

Origa was unable to continue, the silence filled with the sound of Hifumi's quill.

Chapter 26: Hush

Since their decision to prepare for war in only a short while, Hifumi's daily life became quite busy.

He had to train the formation of the troops, prepare the equipment, design a strategy, and in addition read up on the documents related to Fokalore and its surrounding settlements after having become the new feudal lord of the area. He had to come up with the future political measures, too.

"Maa, what will happen, will happen. The problem is the unaccounted-for expenditures. The question is how to handle it well in order to avoid bankruptcy..."

(Hifumi)

Monopolizing one of the several conference rooms within the royal castle, Hifumi, without leaving the royal capital by even one step, passed his time performing his official duties from there.

Today there were 5 slaves he had purchased a few days ago from Ular within that room.

The slaves, who were suddenly brought to the royal castle, were driven by anxiety while they were assigned to different rooms split by gender. These hectic and severe circumstances were also caused by Hifumi, who without giving them any kind of instructions, had them do nothing but eating a gorgeous

meal and sleeping.

And then, on the next day, after having seen the listings in the accounting book of income and expenditure of the Viscount's territory, which was delivered by Sabnak, who had been dispatched to the territory of the former Viscount Hagenti, Hifumi called for an assembly first thing in the morning.

"First of all, please sit down properly. Ah, not on the floor but on a chair." (Hifumi)

He called out to the slaves who didn't know whether such action would be fine and thus remained standing stock still. After confirming that everyone was

seated, he distributed several bound paper bundles to all of them by tossing them.

“Well then, now I will explain the work you are supposed to do for me. Well, although that’s what I am saying, in a short while I will be going to war. In the meanwhile you will learn the things written on those papers.” (Hifumi)

“Ano, master … what are these?” (Slave A)

To the question asked by a single female slave in a small voice, Hifumi replied with a serious look,

“Those are the textbooks I made for you.” (Hifumi)

Hifumi had written down the

methods concerning calculation by division, multiplication by using multiplication tables, percentage calculation, and calculation of size and volume. He also included a simple way of recording an account book. (E: He made a For Dummies math edition? Genius!)

Those were subjects which weren't used by anyone but scholars in this world.

Because they would be mostly dealing with taxes such as poll taxes, he didn't go as far as including difficult calculations.

Something like percentage was introduced by Hifumi for the first time in this world.

“I want you guys to work as civil officials in my new territory. For that reason, this is the least amount you have to learn.” (Hifumi)

Tapping on the documents with his fingers, he said this to all of them while surveying their expressions.

“Ci-Civil O-Officials? Even though were are slaves …” (Slave B)

“If I can use them, it doesn’t matter whether they are commoners or slaves. I only went to Ular’s shop because it was the quickest and easiest way to gather talented personnel. If I meet another qualified fellow somewhere, I intend to employ them whenever possible.” (Hifumi)

After having listened properly to the speech you could call an explanation concerning the contents, the slaves frantically glared at the documents.

They were worried what kind of treatment they would receive if they failed here.

* * *

The entire morning was spent on coaching the slaves. Afterwards it changed into self-study.

Quickly finishing his lunch, Hifumi left the castle and headed towards the training school in the back of the barracks.

Although calling it a training school, it was really nothing more

than an excessively spacious vacant plot you wouldn't expect to find within a city.

100 soldiers and Olga's group were waiting there when he finally arrived.

"All units, line up!"

Raising a cloud of dust by their movement, 100 people straightened their backs.

The soldiers of each unit were already informed on their unit by official papers.

The first unit was compromised of infantry, the second unit of combat engineers, and the third unit of scouts.

Each unit consisted of 30 soldiers.

The other 10 soldiers belonged to the supply corps.

Up until now the division in Orsongrande was simply whether one was infantry or cavalry and whether they were nobles or commoners. Thus such organisation of troops caused bewilderment. However, Hifumi wasn't worried about this matter in the slightest and simply ended it with the few words 「It works well, so we will do it like that」.

"Speaking frankly, because we intend to use the beginning of the war as training, be at ease and come along. Since I will kill the enemies, it is fine for you to just remember

your own duties during the various military maneuvers." (Hifumi)

As Hifumi gave such speech as substitute for a greeting, it obviously caused a commotion among the soldiers.

Even if there was a noble telling them to go to their death, that noble wouldn't do it in such an easygoing manner.

"Hifumi-san, won't the morale of the troops drop, if you put it like that?" (Kasha)

Having been released from the slavery contract, Kasha, who finally got used to the changed way to address him, smiled wryly.

The role of captain leading the first

unit of infantry was entrusted to her.

“It’s fine. As it is often said, the will to act on something until death or to not do it, has nothing to do with having or not having morale. Especially since the combat engineers and transportation corps are positioned in the center and will be guarded by the foot soldiers, they will probably have a lot of free time.” (Hifumi)

Disregarding Kasha, who became sullen with such rejection, he started to explain to each unit their main duties and methods. Because of that, the second unit gathered close by. The other units were ordered to rush and dig holes while waiting for their turn.

With Origa in the lead, the second unit consisting of combat engineers assembled and stood in a line before Hifumi.

“Is there anyone with combat experience among you?” (Hifumi)

Because of Hifumi’s question, several people raised their hands. Listening to the battle circumstances of each of them in order, it turned out that they were similar for all of them.

To put it simply, the style was for the opposing parties to meet up on a plain, have their troops form lines and the let them clash simultaneously just like that.

Before the clash, each of the

opposing commanders decided upon some kind of rule.

Among the engineers, there were some who participated in battles with the beastmen race. The beastmen surrounded them, who were advancing in a file, only to quickly strike them to decrease their numbers before fleeing the field. (T/N: hit-n-run)

Hifumi ended up being greatly perplexed.

He didn't imagine the battles taking place to be nothing more than only such plain maneuvers.

In relation to the combat circumstances, you probably had to praise the beastmen race as

superior all the way.

“I understand. Forget about all the combat experience you obtained up until now. Your duty is to prepare in order to win the war easily. You won’t hear from me such words as Line up in a row and charge.” (Hifumi)

“Prepare in order to win the war easily?” (Origa)

Origa, who stood in front, inquired in place of the baffled soldiers.

“Yes. I will now explain in what way we will be attacking the first town, so listen well.” (Hifumi)

From then on Hifumi explained to each unit what their duties were and which things they had to

arrange. Furthermore he taught them the training schedule until the departure.

“Since I will only be able to come and see occasionally, the captains have to manage things firmly.” (Hifumi)

“Roger!” (Alyssa)

Although Alyssa vigorously answered, the soldiers of the scout unit, which she commandeered, weren’t in a calm state at all.

The draft was for them to promptly seize the information about the enemy’s strategy.

Although that was only to be expected, it wasn’t performed in this world at all.

While listening to the talks of their combat experience, Hifumi considered that the beast race may use scouting, but since the enemies this time around where of the human race, he pushed these considerations into the corner of his mind.

“Well, since I am leaving now, I entrust it to you.” (Hifumi)

Although he was a man, who before long would officially become a viscount, he casually didn’t take any attendants with him and left for the castle town.

* * *

The coming and going within the castle didn’t only include civil

officials and knights, as it was the political center of the nation there were naturally a great number of high ranking nobles as well.

Many of them knew who Hifumi was and what he did on the day he came to this world.

Or rather, they witnessed his actions.

When they heard that Hifumi left the royal capital, they felt relieved for a brief time. Immediately after hearing that he would return then again, they wondered what kind of mistake it was this time for him to receive the treatment of a hero and become a viscount.

For the nobles, who were proud of

their lineage, they thought of him as an intolerable greenhorn deep within their hearts, although they didn't tell him that when they met him face-to-face.

On the contrary, they feared they would be the next ones to be killed by Hifumi if he heard of them speaking incautiously. Thus the topics gathering about Hifumi were only very few.

However, there was nowhere a person who wouldn't be interested in receiving information.

"Your Highness the Princess, appointing the man called Hifumi to a responsible post is a little bit too much, in my humble opinion ..." (Debordo)

Visiting Imeria's office, a male courteous retainer performed a bow while stating this. It was a man called Debordo who was the second son of the Marquis Munzer household, which governed the territory adjourning south of Orsongrande's royal capital.

(Truly a humble opinion, huh?) (Imeria)

Imeria almost ended up revealing what she was thinking as she watched Debordo while he was repeatedly criticizing Hifumi in front of her eyes.

By nature Debordo had a character that looked down on other people. Since he didn't have the corresponding ability to support his

father in his work as Marquis, he earned the rank of vice captain of the third knight corps, which caused his inclination to grow even stronger.

It wasn't like the reason for that was his skillful handling of the sword, nor could you say that he was superior in his business either. Rather he was tossed into that place so he wouldn't cause harm to his surroundings for the time being. As he hadn't any experience as regimental soldier either and yet became vice captain just like that, he was under the impression that it was due to his excellent constitution.

"That gentleman is the hero of this country now. Receiving him coldly

will provoke the masses into a revolt. Besides, while the trouble with Vichy is taking place, his strength will be essential in order to settle it." (Imeria)

"Something like the opinion of the masses, to say nothing about the fact that we are nobles, there is no need for Her Highness the Princess who is of royalty to do them any favors." (Debordo)

Is that guy really saying this? Imeria thought.

Viscount Munzer is truly fortunate that Debordo isn't the eldest son.

The eldest son, who was a stepchild, was the type who handled everything flawlessly without

standing out while doing so.

Debordo's tongue is often moving. (T/N: He talks/boasts about himself too much as proverb, I guess.)

"Please leave the matter of Vichy to me, then such things like a war will be finished in no time for certain." (Debordo)

Debordo's intentions are easy to understand. Imeria judged.

Resolving the friction with Vichy, which was caused by Hifumi's actions to begin with, he was intending to ask for Imeria's hand in marriage as reward for such an achievement.

His biggest rival, the eldest son of the Marquis Lagrain household, had

died. Apparently he considered himself “on his own accord” to be the strongest candidate.

“Well then, let’s leave this duty to him.” (-)

It wasn’t Imeria who called out to Debordo.

It was Hifumi, who came and entered the office performing an unnatural bow while smiling with a broad grin.

“You bastard, who do you think you are! Currently I am about to be appointed to an important mission by Her Highness the Princess!” (Debordo)

Debordo, who advanced matters arbitrarily, shouted, causing Imeria

to sigh now.

In spite of blaming Hifumi earlier, he didn't even know the face of his opponent.

"It is the Hifumi from the topic just now. Leaving that aside, Imeria." (Hifumi)

"What is it?" (Imeria)

"I dare say that this guy's suggestion is a rather nice idea, don't you think?" (Hifumi)

"B-Bastard! How dare you to speak like this to Her Highness the Princess!" (Debordo)

Being disgraced for not having known Hifumi's face, Debordo, who turned red from the neck upwards

due to anger, raised his voice loudly and tried to thrust Hifumi away. But the power he used to push the shoulder was used upon himself in return and he ended up falling to the floor.

“What a rude behaviour towards a marquis!” (Debordo)

“What are you talking about when you fell on your own? Furthermore, since you aren’t the successor, you shouldn’t use the name of the Marquis household either.” (Hifumi)

“Gu gu” (Debordo) (E: Nonsensical stuttering)

Finally reaching the limit of her patience, Imeria interjected before

Debordo, whose dark red blood rose to his head, was able to spat out his next words.

“Munzer, right now Hifumi-sama and I are talking. Restrain yourself.” (Imeria)

“B-Bu-But ...” (Debordo)

“I won’t repeat myself.” (Imeria)

Having been told quite clearly, Debordo left the office while glaring at Hifumi as if he could kill him with no more than that.

“So, what kind of business do you have with me, Hifumi-sama?” (Imeria)

“I want to get your signature for this document.” (Hifumi)

With these words, Hifumi took the document out of the dark magic storage and passed it to Imeria, who took it while frowning.

“... Let me look at it.” (Imeria)

As for the document, it was Orsongrande’s request for reconciliation with the demand to hand over the spy Beirevra as suspect of the incident. This action was required before any kind of negotiation could be considered to begin.

“... Just this demand, this document substantially has no agreement at all.” (Imeria)

“Although I thought about it for a while, I couldn’t come up with any

idea how to have Vichy discover and arrest Beirevra. I think this document will corner Vichy to a certain degree by sending it to the fellows in the central government." (Hifumi)

"As soon as it is delivered it will give Vichy a reason to keep up appearance, right?" (Imeria)

"If they comply, that is, but ..." (Hifumi)

Hifumi sat down in the reception prepared in the office and tossed one of the baked sweets, which were placed on the table, into his mouth.

The sweetness gently spreads within my mouth, as one should

expect of the purveyor of the princess, it is truly refined.

“That’s what you are saying, but you still intend to look for Beirevra.” (Imeria)

“I am a kind master, don’t you agree?” (Hifumi)

Even though that was the cause, he laughed as he stated it.

“Every person lives by killing, be it directly or indirectly, as they grow up. In their case, they were accidentally involved in the deceiving and cheating between human parties and thus they only decided to conclude this matter by killing the other party. Only in regards to the search, he is a

troublesome opponent. Considering this, I only thought that it might be fine for it to become a popular odd job, if a useful reward was to be provided." (Hifumi)

Looking at Hifumi, who threw another of the baked sweets into his mouth, Imeria picked up the quill and signed the document.

"In such a case I will gladly cooperate with you." (Imeria)

While gently blowing upon the document for the sake of drying the ink, she murmured in a voice where it was uncertain whether he had heard it or not.

* * *

And then 10 days passed and the

the preparations were finished. Hifumi's expeditionary force left the royal capital towards Vichy.

Doing it the usual way, he would have left the city magnificently drawing the gazes of the public upon themselves. Since that wasn't Hifumi's intention, they split up in several teams and left the city inconspicuously advancing on the main road before the night was lifted by dawn.

Such things like food and materials had been transported to the city Fokalore which was situated close to the national border. The luggage consisted of most of the soldier's weapons and there were many wagons drawn by the Supply Corps sheltering a large amount of food.

In the first carriage Hifumi and Origa's group, the three captains, were situated alongside Pajou who acted as the Princess' representative and witness.

"... I am getting sleepy." (Alyssa)

"The sun hasn't risen yet either ..." (Kasha)

Apparently Alyssa and Kasha weren't yet fully awake.

Given that they will set a bad example to others as captains, it was the right decision to toss them into the first carriage, Hifumi assessed.

"Upon entering Fokalore, we will stop there for a night and then set out in the early morning again.

Review the contents of the strategy properly." (Hifumi)

"Um ... It is the first time for me hearing of something like "strategy" but ..." (Pajou)

For the knight Pajou Hifumi's method of drafting seemed to feel awkward.

"There is no particular reason for you to do anything. Besides, concerning the general populace I am not overly interested in becoming something like a statesman. Even if I provoked animosity from the beginning, I realized that there are no obstacles in my own way of life, only that we would be chased for our life in a blink of an eye like that." (Hifumi)

“But …” (Pajou)

“Pajou~” (Hifumi)

Stopping what she was about to say, Pajou looked into the eyes of Hifumi.

There were no friendly feelings there.

Just as he displayed on that night where they met for the first time, there was only deep dark and gloomy darkness as he killed people at that time.

“I won’t tell you that I am fighting for the sake of improving this nation or for its people. Just that there is nothing better than an abundant territory to satisfy my desire to fight. Although I don’t

mind if you aim for such a country, but if you become a hindrance to me, I will kill you." (Hifumi)

It had been a while since she had to face Hifumi's bloodlust. Pajou didn't even manage to sweat.

With a dry throat she was gasping to breathe painfully.

Somehow she managed to utter a few words without averting her gaze.

"... I, I will only witness this battle." (Pajou)

"That's how it is and that's how it should be." (Hifumi)

Finishing this talk, Hifumi jumped off the moving carriage and while

running parallel to it, he skilfully climbed on his horse.

After Hifumi was gone, the heavy air within the carriage become a little bit lighter.

“Pajou-san” (Origa)

Origa called out to her as she was drinking water from a leather flask.

“... What’s up?” (Pajou)

“Pajou-san, you never been hostile to Hifumi-sama, isn’t that right?” (Origa)

The style of that question itself was a warning.

Without hesitation, Pajou replied.

“Since I am a knight of Orsongrande, I have to follow my duty.” (Pajou)

“Really? In case this duty causes you to become a hindrance to Hifumi-sama ... please be aware of the fact that not only Hifumi-sama will become your enemy.” (Origa)

Closed in among the sleeping Alyssa and Kasha, Pajou wanted to transfer to riding a horse too.

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